

OCT 16 1961

Approved For Release 1999/09/16 : CIA-RDP70-00058R000

COLUMBIA, OHIO  
MAIL

COLUMBIA 10,000

Ralph de Toledano

# Why Does State Dept. Blithely Ignore Facts?

WASHINGTON—Both the New York police department and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee are agreed that the "suicide" in November, 1959 of Povl Bang-Jensen may have been political murder. Mr. Bang-Jensen was the United Nations official who conducted the inquiry into Soviet brutality and aggression in Hungary. He was fired from the U.N. and subsequently pilloried because he refused to turn over the list of witnesses from whom he had taken testimony. Many of these witnesses had relatives behind the Iron Curtain.

The man chiefly responsible for the discharge of Mr. Bang-Jensen, a dedicated career diplomat, was Andrew Cordier, an American and the executive assistant to the Secretary General.

But the Bang-Jensen case, as a report issued by the Senate Subcommittee confirms, goes far beyond the death of a single man. (Parenthetically, it may be asked why the State Department under both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations fought so desperately to suppress this detailed and carefully researched document.)

Experts on Soviet political terror are convinced that Mr. Bang-Jensen was killed because he had intervened in an effort to help several would-be Communist defectors. These men, who believed that Mr. Bang-Jensen could intercede for them with the U. S. government, were suddenly shipped back to the Soviet Union where they died. This tragic result of their intervention was a consequence of den-

sketchy account of this information to James Barco, then counselor to the American delegation at the U.N. Mr. Barco, in his own words, "attempted to ascertain the nature and details of the information which Mr. Bang-Jensen had in his possession," and he urged the career diplomat to see Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. Mr. Bang-Jensen refused to see anyone but Mr. Dulles.

The chronology is important. Mr. Bang-Jensen first spoke to Mr. Barco in November, 1956, according to the subcommittee, and saw him on a total of eight occasions until June, 1957. CIA Chief Dulles was not informed that Mr. Bang-Jensen wanted to see him until May 3, 1957. By then, the would-be defectors were tightly in Soviet hands and their information lost to the U.S.

The CIA and the FBI, which was also alerted, properly refused to see Mr. Bang-Jensen without some simple suggestion from the State Department that they do so. To do so independently might have seemed like interference in United Nations activities. "But for some reason," the Senate Subcommittee notes, "this suggestion was not forthcoming." In point of fact, Mr. Bang-Jensen was treated with some hostility by U. S. government representatives.

THE STATE Department admits to knowledge of part of the Bang-Jensen story, but it has no explanation for its dilatory attitude. Clearly, the attitude prevailed that anyone who points the finger at the U. S. government is a communist agent or pro-communist. It is a sad state of affairs.